



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ON DISABILITIES  
THE LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & RESEARCH NETWORK

## Plain Language: AUCD Policy Priorities 2023-2024



### Civil Rights and Social Justice

The disability community includes people of all races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and other identities.

#### *Priority Action Steps:*

- Protect civil rights laws, like the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Collect information on how race affects how people with disabilities who receive supports and services to try to improve services and supports.
- Make sure the rights and needs of people with disabilities are included in all areas of federal and state law.

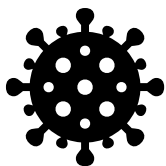


### Living in the Community

People with disabilities have a right to live in the community.

#### *Priority Action Steps:*

- Improve home and community-based services (HCBS).
- Move people from institutions to HCBS.
- Make sure families and caregivers have the supports they need.
- Make sure that Direct Service and other providers are treated as professionals.

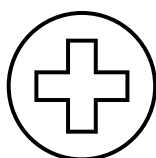


## **COVID-19 Relief**

The health and economic problems caused by COVID-19 are often worse for people with disabilities than people without disabilities.

### *Priority Action Steps:*

- Give people with disabilities, their families, and the people who work with them a COVID-19 tests and vaccine as soon as possible.
- Improve data on who gets COVID-19, you gets the vaccines and who dies from COVID-19.



## **Healthcare**

People with disabilities of all ages face many challenges to receiving good healthcare services and staying in good health.

### *Priority Action Steps:*

- Advocate for better healthcare and more funding for healthcare to make healthcare more accessible to people with disabilities.
- Provide better access to mental health services for people with disabilities.
- Work to make sure the Autism CARES Act and LEND programs continue in 2025.
- Make sure children can get good healthcare when they become adults.

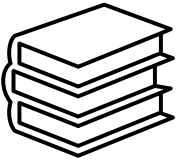


## **Employment**

People with disabilities have a harder time finding good paying jobs than people without disabilities. Many people with disabilities continue to work in sheltered, separated workshops for subminimum wages.

### *Priority Action Steps:*

- End paying people with disabilities less than minimum wage frequently in sheltered workshops, over a few years.
- Improve opportunities for real jobs at real wages in the community, known as competitive integrated employment.



## Education

Students with disabilities deserve to get a good education in local schools with people without disabilities. Education laws like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Higher Education Opportunity Higher Act (HEA) protect civil rights and make sure students with disabilities receive services and supports they need.

### *Priority Action Steps:*

- Make sure that K-12 schools have all of the money and resources they need to best support students with disabilities.
- Support college programs for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.



## Appropriations

All AUCD network centers and programs are affected by the annual federal budget and appropriations process.

### *Priority Action Steps*

- Continue to advocate for funding for AUCD's programs:
  - University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
  - Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities
  - Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers
  - Projects of National Significance
  - Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities
  - the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research
  - Assistive Technology Act programs
  - Family to Family Health Information Centers
  - Other disability programs

